

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 and 3 through 46 remain pending in this application. Claim 2 has been cancelled.

Claims 1 through 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Zamora et al., U.K. Patent Application No. 2,227,666A (hereinafter "Zamora").

Claim 1 recites a tampon pledget including an inverted coverstock. The inverted coverstock includes an insertion end and a removal end. The insertion end and the removal end each have one or more pleats.

Zamora provides a digital tampon having a body of compressed absorbent material overwrapped with a permeable membrane. A withdrawal cord is preferably secured to the tampon body.

Applicants respectfully submit that Zamora fails to disclose or suggest a tampon pledget with an inverted coverstock having an insertion end and the removal end with one or more pleats, as recited in claim 1. The Action asserts Zamora discloses a tampon pledget wherein the insertion end (34) and the removal end (32) each have one or more pleats as set forth in figure 7a. Applicants respectfully disagree. Zamora provides that the skirt is twisted at the proximal end of the tampon body to form a seal and then folded back over the tampon body. (page 6, lines 27-29). Thus, the membrane in Zamora is smoothly compressed around and against the proximal end of the tampon body as clearly shown in Figure 7b, and does not have a removal end having one or more pleats, contrary to claim 1.

In addition, Zamora provides that the ends of the skirt are twisted or closed to form a seal such that the non-permeable material form the secondary wrap. (page 6, lines 29-32). Furthermore, the portion of the membrane extending beyond the seal (35) on the insertion end is free of one or more pleats, as clearly shown in Figure 7b. Thus, the

membrane in Zamora is smoothly compressed around and against the distal end of the tampon body as clearly shown in Figure 7b, and does not have an insertion end having one or more pleats, as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Zamora fails to disclose or suggest all of the claimed features recited in claim 1 and claims 2 through 6 that depend therefrom. As such, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of claims 1 through 6.

Claims 7 through 11 and 14 through 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zamora in view of Foley et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,817,077 (hereinafter "Foley").

Claims 7 through 11 and 14 through 20 include all of the features of claim 1.

Zamora is summarized above. Foley provides a tampon with a substantially hydrophobic cover membrane.

As discussed above, Zamora clearly fails to disclose or suggest a tampon pledget with an inverted coverstock having an insertion end and the removal end with one or more pleats, as recited in claim 1.

Foley fails to cure any of the deficiencies of Zamora in that Foley also fails to disclose or suggest a tampon pledget with an inverted coverstock having an insertion end and the removal end with one or more pleats, as recited in claim 1. Therefore, Zamora and Foley, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the claimed invention recited in claim 1. Thus, for at least this reason, claims 7 through 11 and 14 through 20, which depend directly from claim 1, are also patentable over the cited art, taken alone or in combination. As such, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection of claims 7 through 11 and 14 through 20.

et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,595,974 B2). Upon allowance of the claimed subject matter, a terminal disclaimer will be filed.

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and passage of this application to allowance are respectfully requested.

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